

MID ATLANTIC FISHERY ASSISTANT

Scope

The Fisheries Sampling Branch (FSB) of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) places fisheries observers on board commercial fishing vessels to collect biological, catch, by catch, gear characterization, environmental and economic data from commercial fisheries throughout the northwest Atlantic (Maine to Virginia). These data are used to help assess impacts from commercial fishing on fish populations and protected species. These assessments are used to help develop sound management policies and regulations.

Requirements

The contractor shall perform duties on-site at the NEFSC, Woods Hole, Ma. using computers, equipment and vehicles supplied by the FSB or NEFSC. The position supports staff biologists in various Branch activities, but primarily in the area of mid Atlantic sea day schedule completion. Summary reports and GIS mapping will be used to help track this aspect of the position. Incumbent is involved in a full range of professional activities in the area of fishery biology, often working independently.

Specific Tasks

The following tasks are related to sea day completion:

Assists senior biologist with planning, coordinating and executing observer coverage in commercial fisheries throughout the mid Atlantic. Identifies problems and recommends changes and improvements to data/sample collection procedures and protocols. Tracks vessel selections ensuring that they are random, equitable, and without bias.

Shall regularly communicate and collaborate with commercial fishing industry to enhance data collection and sampling and meet deployment schedules.

Develops and maintains an effort matrix of commercial fisheries covered by FSB in the mid Atlantic. This matrix will include, at a minimum, closures, quotas, time and spatial distribution.

Tracks regulatory changes and effort shifts for mid Atlantic fisheries covered by FSB. Provides input on appropriateness, feasibility and attainability of the sea day schedule to COTR.

Monitors fishing effort by accessing various landings and effort monitoring databases at NEFSC, NERO and mid Atlantic states.

Monitors completion of sea day schedule keeping COTR informed of any shortcomings. Makes recommendations for rescheduling days not completed by working with end users.

Keeps Branch Chief informed of important and controversial data and compliance issues. Keeps Branch Chief informed of any substandard data collection performance by observers and any problems with completing FSB's sea day schedule.

Reviews current data and biological sampling procedures/protocols making suggestions to ensure that they are both current and relevant to end user's needs.

Assists with the preparation of information requests, coordinating with the Branch Chief.

Prepares monthly summary reports of observer coverage including sea day accomplishments by observer/gear type. Monitors vessel selection by observer/port. Prepares similar report and maps for NEFOP website.

Assists observers with documentation of trip refusals and preparation of affidavits to be used in compliance cases. Tracks refusals, by working with fisheries observers, area coordinators and NMFS enforcement, ensuring resolution.

Maintains the Pre Trip Vessel Safety Checklists data base. Reviews and enters checklists as they are received. Reports any vessel that may have safety problems to the COTR, contractor and appropriate area coordinator. Tracks progress of vessels found to have safety deficiencies.

Procures, maintains and keeps accurate disposition records for all FSB issued observer equipment. Checks in returned equipment.

Represents NEFOP at Mid Atlantic Fisheries Management Council meetings when COTR is unavailable. Keeps COTR and NEFOP Branch Chief informed of observer issues that may come up during the meetings. Assists with information requests from council.

Attends meetings, conferences, workshops and training as required.

On occasion the incumbent may be asked to assist with data editing.

Observer Training:

- Assists with observer training when needed.
- Attends all safety training and makes recommendations for improvements. Ensures that training is current and in keeping with Nation Safety Standards.
- Prepares Turtle Biological Sampling Kits. Maintains Sampling Kit inventory.

Field work:

- Conducts or assist in alternative platform studies from small vessels as needed.
- Participates on research cruises aboard NOAA, chartered research or commercial fishing vessels to collect fisheries, marine mammal, sea turtle and sea bird data and biological samples. The contractor shall pay time and a half for hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours a day, or more than forty hours a week while at sea participating in research cruises.

- Travels to various fishing ports, as part of outreach, meeting with the commercial fishing industry to explain or answer questions concerning the observer program. Such outreach will be conducted to help improve industry/observer program relations and facilitate observer placement in mid Atlantic fisheries. Conducts post trip interviews, as needed, with skippers to resolve questions/concerns or problems with observers or FSB.

Progress Compliance

Semi-Annual reviews will assess the contractor's performance, the degree of independence, original thinking, motivation and cooperativeness.

Acceptance

The COTR will monitor contractor's performance and provide feedback to the Branch Chief.

Responsibilities

The Government will provide appropriate computer equipment and software, office space and utilities necessary to accomplish the described tasks. The incumbent receives specific instructions regarding work methods, equipment, procedures, and expected results. Once routine procedures have been established and verified by the COTR, the contractor is expected to perform the procedures without supervision, unless problems are encountered. Work is reviewed in progress and upon completion for accuracy, as well as thoroughness and conformance with established procedures and instructions.

Qualifications

Desired education would include a B.S. degree, or higher, in Marine Biology, Fisheries, or a related field. Desired work experience would include work performed in fishery science, fishery management, observer program or data collection projects. Although these education and related work experiences are not requirements, they will however be used when determining starting salary. The incumbent must demonstrate an interest in fishery science and management and a general knowledge of data collection and analysis procedures and techniques. Other desired skills would include: Oracle, SQL, UNIX, Database management/coordination, Excel or Quatro Pro, PowerPoint or GIS mapping programs.

Period of Contract

This contract will be renewed yearly and run from November 30th to December 1st, of each year.

Hours per week

40 with the possibility of overtime (time and a half) on occasion.

Starting salary

Incumbent will start at the equivalent of a GS 7 or 9, depending on education and work experience. See above "Qualifications."

SPECIAL NOTE: Security and Safety Requirements

All contracted employees, selected for a position, must complete the appropriate security paperwork and take the on-line Security Awareness Briefing at WWW.SECURITY.NOAA.GOV. Additionally, a NOAA on-line Safety Training Course must be completed upon reporting for duty at WWW.ECS.NOAA.GOV/.

Paperwork for 1 year contracts will include the following:

Special Agreement Check

- OFI Form 86C
- FD - 258 (Applicant fingerprint chart)
- NOAA Form 65-8
- Certificate of Completion for on-line Security Awareness Briefing
- Certificate of Completion for on-line Safety Training.
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Additional security information/requirements may be found at WWW.OSY.NOAA.GOV.

Please contact Laura Shulman at lsbulman@integratedstatistics.com to apply.